

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MANAGU 04113 012038Z POSS DUPE
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 MCT-02 HA-05
AID-05 CCO-00 FBOE-00 OC-06 OPR-02 USSS-00 CA-01
A-01 SCS-06 OMB-01 SY-05 AGRE-00 COME-00 EB-08
LAB-04 SIL-01 FAA-00 DOTE-00 PC-01 NSCE-00 SSO-00
ICAE-00 INRE-00 /100 W
-----080269 012225Z /64

O R 011925Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7666
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANAGUA 4113

FOR ARA, ARA/CEN AND WLG

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS:PINS,MILI CDES, NU, CS
SUBJECT: GENERAL SITUATION IN NICARAGUA

REFS: A) MANAGUA 4111, B) GRAHAM-TUCKER TELECON SEPT 1

1. GUARDIA NACIONAL SOURCE TOLD DATT THIS MORNING (SEPT 1)
THAT THERE IS NO SERIOUS VIOLENCE IN NICARAGUA. GN SAYS
THAT FIGHTING HAS STOPPED MATAGALPA, ESTELI AND JINOTEGA.
A LOCAL EMPLOYEE REPORTS THAT MASAYA IS QUIET. EMBASSY
EMPLOYEES HEARD SOME DISTANT BOMB BLASTS DURING LAST NIGHT.
ALL MISSION PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN WARNED TO RESTRICT TRAVEL
IN AND OUTSIDE MANAGUA AND TO STOCK UP ON SUPPLIES. WE DO
NOT, REPEAT, NOT BELIEVE THE SITUATION WARRANTS A STANDFAST
ORDER.

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2. AS PER REF TELECON ONE ALLEGED AMERICAN CITIZEN HAS BEEN
KILLED IN THE MATAGALPA FIGHTING. HIS NAME IS ELI OTHMAN
SAMARA. ACCORDING TO HIS BORTHER WHO CAME TO THE
CONSULAR SECTION TO REPORT HIS DEATH, HE IS A
NATURALIZED AMERICAN CITIZEN BORN IN PALESTINE. HIS
WIFE IS SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE IN MANAGUA FROM THE U.S.
TODAY, AND WE ARE FACILITATING, THROUGH THE RED CROSS

AND GN, HIS BROTHER'S PLAN TO BRING THE BODY FROM MATAGALPA TO MANAGUA TODAY. ACCORDING TO THE BROTHER, SAMARA WAS SHOT WHEN HE WENT OUT ON HIS BALCOMY TO LOOK AROUND. SHOT MAY HAVE BEEN A STRAY BULLET OR FROM THE GN MISTAKING HIM FOR A SNIPER. THIS REPORTEDLY TOOK PLACE AROUND NOON YESTERDAY (AUG 31).

3. COMMOFF PATRICIA HAIGH ASKED FOR AND RECEIVED PERMISSION TO VISIT MATAGALPA TOGETHER WITH A US NEWSMAN. WE EXPECT HER TO RETURN WITH A REPORT ON THE MATAGALPA SITUATION LATER THIS AFTERNOON, AND FURTHER DETAILS ON THE SITUATION HERE WILL BE REPORTED LATER TODAY IN OUR SITREP.

4. ALL PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEERS IN MATAGALPA (8), ESTILI (1), JINOTEGA (4), LEON (3) AND CHINENDEGA (2) WERE BROUGHT INTO MANAGUA EARLIER THIS WEEK. PC DIRECTOR HAS SENT CABLES TELLING THE 4 PCVS IN THE RIO SAN JUAN AREA TO RETURN TO MANAGUA. ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT HAVE REPORTS OF VIOLENCE IN RIO SAN JUAN, IT IS CLOSE TO COSTA RICAN BORDER WHERE FSLN ATTACKS HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN THE PAST. THE DIRECTOR IS PLANNING TO GO TO MATIGUAS TODAY TO BRING TO MANAGUA THE TWO PCVS THERE BECAUSE OF REPORTS OF VIOLENCE IN WHICH FIVE GN SOLDIERS WERE SHOT.

5. ALTHOUGH PCVS IN OTHER AREAS OF THE COUNTRY ARE CONSIDERED SAFE, WE ARE GRADUALLY BRINGING ALL OF THEM TO CONFIDENTIAL

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MANAGUA, THE TIMING AND MEANS DEPENDENT UPON OUR BEST EVALUATION ON THE SAFETY OF TRAVEL FROM THOSE AREAS. WE PLAN TO LOCATE THEM IN TWO OR THREE OUT-OF-THE-WAY LOCATIONS IN THE MANAGUA AREA AND THEY WILL NOT BE PERMITTED TO TRAVEL TO ANY LOCATIONS WHERE VIOLENCE MIGHT OCCUR.

6. COMMENT: AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, EMBASSY IS FACING CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY IN LEARNING THE ACTUAL FACTS OF THE SITUATION HERE. FOREIGN REPORTERS, PRIMARILY US, HAVE BEEN REGULARLY CONTACTED BUT OFTEN THEIR STORIES DO NOT JIBE. INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM THE GUARDIA NACIONAL CANNOT BE RELIED UPON, NOT ONLY BECAUSE THEY WOULD NATURALLY PUT THE BEST LIGHT ON THEIR INFORMATION BUT ALSO BECAUSE THEY THEMSELVES MAY NOT KNOW THE FACTS. THEY HAVE NO REAL COMMAND CENTER INTO WHICH AN ORDERLY FLOW OF FACTS COULD COME FROM AREA COMMANDERS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. CONSEQUENTLY, THEY MAY BELIEVE WHAT THEY TELL US (AND DATT DOES NOT BELIEVE THEY HAVE BEEN LYING TO HIM), BUT WE HAVE TO REGARD THEIR INFORMATION WITH A HIGH DEGREE OF SKEPTICISM.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MANAGU04113
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: n/a
Format: TEL
From: MANAGUA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197808109/aaaadnhq.tel
Line Count: 116
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Message ID: 6e9c1759-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 MANAGUA 4111, GRAHAM-TUCKER TELECON SEPT 1
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1566024
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GENERAL SITUATION IN NICARAGUA
TAGS: PINS, MILI, CDES, NU, CS
To: SECSTATE WASHDC GUATEMALA MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6e9c1759-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014